

ABSTRACT

A catalyst composition suitable for use as a catalyst for the preparation of an ester comprises (a) an organometallic compound which is the reaction product of an orthoester or condensed orthoester of titanium, zirconium or aluminum, an alcohol containing at least two hydroxyl groups, an organophosphorus compound containing at least one P-OH group and preferably a base, and (b) a compound of germanium, antimony or tin. A process for the preparation of an ester comprises carrying out an esterification reaction in the presence of the catalyst composition. In a further embodiment the organometallic compound comprises the reaction product of, in addition, a 3-hydroxy carboxylic acid.